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Twenty-third progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1938 (2010), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2011 and requested me to report on preparations for the 2011 elections and progress in achieving the core transition benchmarks, including the development of a joint transition plan for the transfer of responsibility for internal security from UNMIL to the appropriate national authorities. The present report provides an update on major developments since my report of 14 February 2011 (S/2011/72) and contains my recommendations for the renewal of the UNMIL mandate.

II. Major developments

A. Political situation

2. During the reporting period, political developments were dominated by activities of political parties in preparation for the upcoming constitutional referendum and the presidential and legislative elections, scheduled to take place on 23 August and 11 October, respectively. Despite a number of party mergers, including additions to the Unity Party, of which President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is a member, the political landscape remained fluid and fragmented, with significant floor-crossing. As of 1 August, 18 of the 32 registered political entities had elected their presidential candidates. Among the main parties from 2005, the Unity Party confirmed President Johnson Sirleaf as its presidential candidate and Vice-President Joseph Boakai as vice-presidential candidate; the Liberty Party elected Charles Brumskine and Bong County Senator Franklin Siakor as its presidential and vice-presidential candidates; and the Congress for Democratic Change elected Winston Tubman as its presidential candidate and George Weah, its 2005 presidential candidate, as its vice-presidential candidate. On 22 August, the National Elections Commission is scheduled to announce a provisional list of candidates for the 88 legislative seats being contested.

3. The Inter-Party Consultative Committee continued to provide an important forum for addressing key issues arising among political parties and the National Elections Commission, including modalities for the elections. Within the framework

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of the Committee, an agreement was reached to start the political campaign period on 5 July instead of 18 August. However, disagreements remain among some parties and with the National Elections Commission regarding the legal framework for the elections, which could threaten the electoral timeline should they remain unresolved. One party took legal action to halt the electoral districting exercise on constitutional grounds, although the petition was not upheld by the Supreme Court. Another suit, on which there is still no ruling, disputed the composition of the National Elections Commission, and an injunction to halt the conduct of the referendum was sought on constitutional grounds, but no ruling has been made. My Special Representative has intensified her good offices to engage political parties in an inclusive dialogue to reach a common understanding regarding these issues, including the interpretation of article 91 of the Constitution, regarding the threshold required for the referendum to amend the Constitution.

4. Meanwhile, little progress has been made in the national reconciliation process since the President submitted the third quarterly report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the legislature in January. As directed by the President, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights is expected to take on greater responsibilities regarding the recommendations, including to develop a road map for national reconciliation and to establish the Palava Hut Programme — a mechanism for perpetrators to seek public forgiveness. So far, there has been no concrete progress towards implementing the Palava Hut Programme, despite a statement by the President in June that it would be implemented in the coming months.

B. Security situation

5. The security situation in Liberia remained generally stable, but fragile. The impact of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire on the border areas of Liberia, combined with continuing ethnic and communal tensions and disputes over land and other resources, presented significant security challenges. Limited employment and livelihood opportunities, particularly among youth, remained major factors affecting security, while serious crime and other illegal activities are still prevalent.

6. As indicated in my latest report on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) dated 24 June 2011 (S/2011/387), the influx into Liberia of Ivorian combatants and Liberian nationals who fought in Côte d'Ivoire constituted a major security threat that the Government and UNMIL are working to address. In April, Government security personnel arrested a known former Liberian warlord for allegedly fighting in Côte d'Ivoire. During questioning, he reported that other fighters had returned to Liberia through unofficial border-crossing points. The Government has shown its intention to prosecute Liberians who fought in Côte d'Ivoire, and about 20 have been arrested to date, although most were released owing to lack of evidence and/or weak cases brought by the prosecution.

7. In June, 88 suspected Ivorian combatants, who were detained in a local prison after crossing the border in Maryland County in April, were interned in a special facility in Bong County. A mixed group of suspected fighters, including more than 90 Ivorian nationals, reportedly entered River Gee County in May, and on 14 June, Liberian security agencies retrieved a significant number of weapons and ammunition from a cache in River Gee County believed to have been hidden by this

group. UNMIL destroyed the weapons and ammunition in July and 37 people have been arrested in connection with the cache.

8. Tensions related to land disputes continued to pose serious threats to the long-term stability of Liberia. In March, following the renewal of a long-standing inter-county land dispute, about 50 people armed with cutlasses and single-barrel shotguns, allegedly from Maryland County, attacked a village in Grand Kru County, setting two houses ablaze. The national police and UNMIL intervened and brought the situation under control, and officers of the Emergency Response Unit of the Liberia National Police were subsequently deployed to maintain the peace.

9. Labour disputes also continued to cause security incidents, which are likely to increase given the development of large plantations and timber and extractive industries. On 26 May, 30 workers of the Cavalla Rubber Corporation in Maryland County went to the Magisterial Court, where four of their fellow workers were to appear following their arrest. On the way to court, elements from the Emergency Response Unit of the Liberia National Police attempted to stop them, and during the ensuing confrontation shot and killed one worker. Subsequently, a group of residents burned down two of the plantation buildings. The Liberia National Police and UNMIL were deployed to the scene and brought the situation under control. In March, protests in Monrovia regarding teachers' salary arrears escalated into violent clashes between students and Liberia National Police Support Unit officers, resulting in the temporary closure of the city's schools.

10. Ethnic tensions continued to be a concern. In June, an altercation between members of the Mano and Krahn ethnic groups in Sowaken Village, Grand Gedeh County, resulted in a group of about 20 members of the Krahn ethnic group attacking and destroying several houses and looting belongings of members of the Mano and Gio ethnic groups. Liberian security officials and UNMIL responded and restored calm.

11. Six incidents of mob violence against police authorities and infrastructure were reported in the period. In May, a traffic accident between an UNMIL vehicle and a motorcycle taxi resulted in a mob clashing violently with the national police, and the destruction by fire of a police station in Saclapea, Nimba County.

C. Economic situation

12. Economic growth in 2010 was 5.6 per cent, slightly lower than the projected rate of 6.3 per cent. The growth rate for 2011 is projected to be 6.8 per cent. Commodity exports continued to rebound, and modest expansion of the service sector and increases in foreign direct investment, mainly in extractive industries, contributed to economic growth. In May, the Government submitted a draft national budget of $458.9 million for fiscal year 2011/12, which was 26 per cent greater than the previous year's budget. Despite achieving the completion point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative in June 2010, which reduced the country's debt stock significantly, the Government has taken only a few concessional loans.

13. Inflation was projected to be higher in 2011, at 8.1 per cent, compared to 7.2 per cent in 2010, reflecting the vulnerability of Liberia to global price increases of fuel and food, as it imports about two thirds of its food supply. A recent survey found that domestic prices of essential goods, especially rice, rose by an average of

more than 30 per cent over the last six months. Also, a 2010 Labour Force Survey estimated that 77 per cent of employed Liberians were vulnerably employed and unable to count on basic benefits or job security.

14. Following the Government's decision to extend the poverty reduction strategy from June to December 2011, preparations have been under way to develop a framework for a successor programme. Led by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Governance Commission, 15 sectoral working groups were established to review implementation of the poverty reduction strategy and produce sectoral road maps for continued development of the country's economic, social and infrastructural sectors to feed into the second phase of the poverty reduction strategy, ultimately forming part of the Liberia Rising Vision 2030 Project.

D. Regional situation

15. The post-election crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has created significant security and humanitarian challenges for Liberia. As indicated in paragraphs 6 and 7 above, the continued presence of militias and other armed elements in western Côte d'Ivoire and border areas continued to pose a threat for the entire subregion, particularly Liberia. The Government, supported by UNMIL, is increasing its patrolling and presence along the Ivorian border to monitor the situation and provide deterrence, but the 700-km border is difficult to monitor. UNMIL and UNOCI have intensified inter-mission cooperation, including restarting joint border activities under "Operation Mayo", increasing joint meetings, coordinating ground and air patrols and institutionalizing information-sharing, including by establishing liaison officers in neighbouring contingents across the border. UNMIL and UNOCI conducted a joint assessment mission to western Côte d'Ivoire in June. Furthermore, the Governments of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire have engaged in discussions about border security, including on 9 July, when the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire led a delegation on an official visit to Monrovia. An extraordinary summit of the Mano River Union was held in Monrovia on 17 July, where, in addition to other issues, cross-border security cooperation was discussed, and it was decided that a technical committee would be established to better coordinate border security issues in the region.

16. Renewed tensions in Guinea are being monitored closely. Violent clashes in May between members of the Kpelle and Mandingo ethnic groups in the town of Galakpai, near the Liberian border, led to an influx of Guineans into Liberia, primarily from the Kpelle ethnic group. By 1 August, the Liberian refugee agency estimated that more than 3,000 Guinean nationals had sought refuge in several border towns in Bong County, Liberia. Meanwhile, during the period, the Government of Liberia and UNMIL continued to conduct joint border operations with the Governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone.

17. Liberia continued to be vulnerable to drug trafficking. Hard drugs, including heroin and cocaine, transit through Liberia in limited amounts. Domestic production of marijuana is flourishing and in many areas is thought to be replacing other agricultural activities, with large amounts crossing into neighbouring countries. There are also reports of human trafficking using similar routes. In May, the Government joined the West Africa Coast Initiative, a multi-stakeholder framework

for implementing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regional action plan to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa; and in July the Liberia National Police Transnational Crime Unit began operations.

E. Humanitarian situation

18. By the end of May, more than 180,000 refugees from Côte d'Ivoire were registered in Grand Gedeh, Maryland, Nimba and River Gee Counties. After verification by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and some returns, mainly from Nimba County, refugee figures were estimated to be 140,000 at the end of June. However, influxes into southern Liberia continued, albeit at a slower pace, and by 1 August the total number of registered refugees was estimated to be 160,000. Refugee camps were constructed in Nimba and Maryland Counties, transit camps are being converted into permanent camps, and a new camp is being constructed in Grand Gedeh County. The vast majority of refugees, however, remain in remote border communities, making the delivery of assistance difficult and putting pressure on already scarce resources in host communities. The Government is therefore encouraging refugees to relocate to refugee camps or villages farther from the border, which are considered more secure. A revised emergency humanitarian action plan was launched on 24 March and included a request for $146.5 million to support 150,000 refugees, of which 50 per cent has been funded. The plan has been revised further to cover the humanitarian needs of 160,000 refugees and 100,000 Liberians in host communities, requesting a total of $166 million for the rest of 2011.

III. Mandate implementation

A. Preparations for elections

19. Preparations for the referendum and elections took on greater momentum, with the National Elections Commission confirming 23 August 2011 as the date for a constitutional referendum. There are four proposed amendments to the Constitution, three of which are election related: to change the electoral system from an absolute to a simple majority for all elections except those for president and vice-president; to move election day from October to November; and to revise the residency clause for presidential and vice-presidential candidates from 10 to 5 consecutive years immediately prior to an election. The fourth provision would increase the mandatory retirement age for chief justices to 75. The National Elections Commission has confirmed the date for the presidential and legislative elections as 11 October 2011, although the results of the referendum may shift them to 8 November. The voter registration exercise concluded in February and, according to the National Elections Commission, close to 1.8 million people registered, representing about 89 per cent of the estimated eligible population, of whom 49 per cent are women.

20. The National Elections Commission launched a civic and voter education campaign on 5 April, designing a number of activities in partnership with civil society. UNMIL supported the dissemination of information on the electoral process through radio programmes and other outreach activities in rural areas. Also, training

was conducted by the National Elections Commission and other partners for over 400 women political aspirants. Despite delays owing to a writ of prohibition before the Supreme Court that questioned the constitutionality of conducting districting based on the Threshold Bill, the National Elections Commission was able to complete districting countrywide and issued a final map on 8 July. The overall electoral timeline was maintained, and candidate nominations started as scheduled on 20 July.

21. My Special Representative supported the reactivation of the International Contact Group for Liberia and other initiatives to support the inter-party dialogue of the National Elections Commission, as outlined in paragraph 3 above. UNMIL intensified its work with Liberian authorities to create an atmosphere conducive to peaceful elections and strengthened its monitoring of electoral, legal, political, public information, security and human rights issues to mitigate tensions, while closely monitoring the political campaign. To help ensure a level playing field, UNMIL Radio continues to provide equitable air time to all parties to discuss their political platforms, and the Mission provided a human rights checklist to national observer groups to assist with monitoring during electoral periods.

22. UNMIL coordinated international assistance to the electoral process through the Donor Coordination Group and continues efforts to mobilize donors to help mitigate the $4 million shortfall in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) basket fund. UNMIL also provided capacity-building for national security institutions in the planning and training of personnel to provide security for the elections, although resources still have not been identified by the Government to cover the cost of securing the elections. Meanwhile, the Mission has developed security and contingency plans for the provision of effective security support to national authorities for the conduct of peaceful elections.

23. The National Elections Commission developed its plan to deliver electoral materials to the 1,780 polling precincts and has requested the support of UNMIL to deliver materials by air to the least accessible magisterial warehouses in six of the 15 counties. UNMIL deployed magisterial electoral officers to support National Elections Commission magistrates in all counties. Conducting the referendum, and possibly the first round of elections, at the height of the rainy season will be a formidable logistical challenge. Given that the ballots cannot be printed until the outcome of the referendum is known, the timeline between ballot printing and distribution will be extremely tight.

B. Security sector reform

1. National security strategy and architecture

24. Concerned stakeholders called for the passing of key pieces of security sector-related legislation before the current legislative session ends. The House of Representatives Security Committee held a public hearing on the National Security Reform and Intelligence Bill on 11 May, and a number of proposals put forward at the hearing were incorporated into the draft, including a provision to maintain, in some form, the Drug Enforcement Administration, which was originally to be dissolved and its activities incorporated into the Liberia National Police.

25. The UNDP Justice and Security Trust Fund, whose remit was recently extended to include support to justice institutions, and the Peacebuilding Fund have begun to play important roles in supporting the growth of the security sector, in particular the work of the Liberia National Police and other security and justice institutions. While the Peacebuilding Fund is financing the development of the Gbarnga Justice and Security Hub, the UNDP Justice and Security Trust Fund has provided support to the national police, immigration and corrections services and the judiciary by providing support for training, mobility and critical infrastructure. The Government has made modest progress in increasing security sector allocations in the 2011-2012 national budget, although the issue of recurring costs remains a challenge. The need to scale up support for the security sector, particularly the Liberia National Police, is becoming more evident in view of the upcoming UNMIL transition. In terms of promoting enhanced oversight and accountability, a review of the capacity of legislative security committees has been initiated.

2. Armed Forces of Liberia

26. The current strength of the Armed Forces of Liberia stands at 2,012, including infantry, engineering and military police units, as well as a coast guard of 51 personnel with four vessels. Fifty military mentors from the United States of America continued to support the building of a professional and capable force, including developing army staff to assume greater command responsibilities. The army has implemented its 2010-2011 annual training plan, the culmination of which was the execution of two UNMIL-supported battalion-level field exercises in April 2011, as well as a training package to prepare the army for potential future peacekeeping duties. The army successfully conducted a number of joint operations, including a complex operation with other security institutions, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and UNMIL, in June, to transport suspected former combatants from Côte d'Ivoire across the country to the Government-designated internment camp. The Coast Guard also conducted joint operations with UNMIL aerial maritime patrols in coastal waterways to identify and report illegal maritime activities.

27. Although it had been estimated that the army would become fully operational in 2012, a number of factors, including insufficient equipment, delays in the procurement of new assets and continued delays in endorsing the national defence strategy, will likely delay the army's full operational status until at least 2014. Nevertheless, activities and operations undertaken so far showed growing operational capacity.

28. Incidents of ill-discipline on the part of Armed Forces personnel, including harassment of civilians, altercations with national police, including one resulting in the murder of a police officer, and criminal activity, continued to raise concern.

3. Liberia National Police

29. Efforts to address the situation along the border between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire and planning for the elections have created significant challenges for the Liberia National Police, an already stretched organization that is continuing to develop its institutional capacity. The Liberia National Police Emergency Response Unit and other police officers have engaged in border operations, in collaboration with other security agencies and with support from UNMIL, which presented a unique opportunity to test the capacity of national security agencies. While the

Liberia National Police has shown increased capacity to execute complex operations, those operations have also revealed worrisome logistical and capability gaps. In particular, mobility remains a major issue, affecting their ability to rapidly deploy throughout the country, with UNMIL continuing to provide air and other logistical support. The Liberia National Police also prepared to assume the primary security role during the referendum and elections.

30. In the light of the transition planning process and the evolving security situation along the border, UNMIL worked with the Liberia National Police to reprioritize projects in its strategic plan. Twenty-five priority projects are nearing completion and have already had an impact on foundational and structural systems, such as fleet management and vehicle accountability measures. A manpower establishment plan to identify rational staffing requirements and ranking structures, which takes into account changing needs to cover regional headquarters staffing, is almost finalized.

31. With UNMIL and donor support, the National Police Training Academy continued to train new police officers. As at 1 August, there were 4,153 Liberia National Police officers, including 620 Police Support Unit officers and 322 Emergency Response Unit officers. The Police Support Unit's overall strength of 620 personnel meets the strategic objective to train 600 such officers by the time elections are held, although recent graduates are not yet fully operational, lacking equipment and logistical support. Overall, female representation in the police force stands at 16 per cent.

32. The development of the Bureau for Immigration and Naturalization continued. In addition to completing a number of documents laying its institutional foundation, the agency has been active along the border of Côte d'Ivoire, which has highlighted the huge challenges the Bureau still faces. The UNDP Justice and Security Trust Fund is providing support to enhance its capacity and arrangements are being made for immigration officers to be housed in the Gbarnga Hub, which will provide an effective forward operational base.

C. Judicial, legal and corrections institutions

33. Coordination and collaboration within the justice sector and between the justice and security sectors has continued to strengthen. A joint judiciary and Ministry of Justice retreat in February and the subsequent peacebuilding workshop brought major stakeholders together to prioritize needs to improve justice delivery. UNMIL continued to focus on strengthening the capacity of rule of law institutions and mechanisms, supporting efforts to improve delivery and access to justice and mentoring key justice-sector actors.

34. The Government-led Pretrial Detention Task Force continued its efforts to address delays in the criminal justice system and developed an action plan. A draft on reforming the jury law to expedite the processing of criminal cases has been prepared for presentation to the legislature. Also, an assessment of existing record-keeping systems in courts and prosecutors' offices has been completed, and new standardized designs have been developed to better track cases. Furthermore, 61 non-lawyer magistrates graduated from the Judicial Institute's Professional Magistrates Training Programme in June, which should increase the efficiency of the criminal justice system, especially in rural areas. Although anticipated

consultations regarding the harmonization of formal and customary justice systems have not yet been held, the issue remained on the Government's agenda and related activities are ongoing, including an assessment of the tribal governors' court system.

35. Despite these positive developments, significant challenges continued to slow progress in the justice sector, particularly insufficient human capacity, infrastructure and equipment; outdated legal frameworks; and dependence on donor funding. An illustration of this is a one-year project tracking cases of sexual violence through the criminal justice system, completed in April, which found that it would take roughly 10 years, working at the current capacity, to clear the backlog of sexual violence cases alone.

36. Although comprehensive efforts continued to improve prevention, response to and management of cases of sexual and gender-based violence, the high number of reported rapes, particularly those involving young victims, remained a serious concern. Efforts continued to strengthen the Liberia National Police Women and Children Protection Section, and its headquarters was completed in April. Improvements in case follow-through and coordination with prosecutors have been noted. A team of experts from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict visited Liberia in April to identify support that could be most useful to the Government in responding to sexual violence.

37. The security situation in corrections facilities remained fragile, with 10 prison escape incidents recorded in the past six months. Prison population trends outside of Monrovia showed a slow but steady increase, while the population at Monrovia Central Prison remained stable, owing largely to the special mobile magistrates' court operating there. Pretrial detention rates remained extremely high at 80 per cent nationwide. Although overcrowding remained an issue in all facilities, there was some progress in developing prisoner rehabilitation activities at a number of facilities.

D. Human rights

38. Liberia continued its efforts to apply a human rights approach to policy and planning and to improve its human rights situation. In March, a Government delegation attended the Human Rights Council universal periodic review follow-up session in Geneva to present responses to the remaining 41 recommendations out of a total of 113 from the November 2010 session. The session addressed a number of issues, including the application of the death penalty, measures to address sexual and gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices and the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations. The delegation from Liberia noted that while steps were being taken to address these issues, it could not take a position on the repeal of the death penalty and the criminalization of female genital mutilation. A mechanism has been put in place to promote and monitor implementation of the universal periodic review recommendations. UNMIL supported the Government of Liberia in its preparation for the universal periodic review as part of its ongoing capacity-building, monitoring and advocacy mandate.

39. Since its formal establishment in October 2010, the functioning of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights has been limited. Although the Commission has conducted some monitoring visits and has investigated allegations

of excessive force by police in Monrovia, it has faced internal divisions that have compromised its public image and affected implementation of its 2011 workplan. Civil society organizations, through the Transitional Justice Working Group, are holding talks with the commissioners to facilitate a refocus on the Commission's mandate.

E. Consolidation of State authority

40. The Government took a number of steps to consolidate State authority, including extending administrative services from county headquarters to districts, deploying additional technical staff, building administrative capacity and paying salaries more regularly. The President formally endorsed the decentralization policy, providing for political, fiscal and administrative devolution of authority to the 15 county administrations and preparing the policy for legislative action. With the support of international partners, a pilot decentralization project is being implemented in nine counties. Challenges remain, however, especially relating to logistics and retaining trained and qualified technical staff. Although coordination mechanisms for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy and county development agendas continued to function, meetings have been irregular owing to the absenteeism of key county officials.

41. The Government has instituted stricter guidelines and procedures for the use of the county development fund, which was frozen in 2010 owing to allegations of mismanagement. The recruitment of county field monitoring officers to track and report on the use of the fund is expected to help restore public confidence in local authorities.

42. Extensive work has been conducted on over 1,000 km of road since November 2010, in particular in the south-east, to which the Government and multilateral and bilateral donors have contributed, while UNMIL continued to carry out repairs along its main supply routes. However, Liberia still does not have new major paved-road construction, which hampers the efforts of the Government to provide services throughout the country.

F. Governance

43. Legal and other bottlenecks continued to hamper the effective prosecution of major corruption cases, and although the first corruption conviction was handed down in May, involving Central Bank employees accused of recycling cheques, the case was at a relatively low level. Follow-up on recommendations of General Auditing Commission audit reports continued to be slow. In March, President Johnson Sirleaf announced that she would not renominate the Auditor-General for another term.

44. The operations of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission continued with a nationwide information campaign on integrity in public conduct. The Commission has submitted a total of 25 corruption cases to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution since March 2009. However, the President's proposal that the Commission acquire prosecutorial powers has not yet been pursued.

45. The Land Commission completed its five-year strategic plan and established a land dispute resolution task force to develop policy and explore alternative dispute resolution methods. The Commission also continued its work on the harmonization of county boundaries, but only 2 of 10 disputes had been resolved so far because of resource constraints. Also, after two years of working under executive orders, in June the President signed into law the act establishing the Law Reform Commission. Limited progress was made in the Constitutional reform process, despite the efforts of the Governance Commission to revive the Constitutional Review Task Force.

G. Management of natural resources

46. Control of diamond mining and trade continued to face challenges. Implementation of the recommendations of the 2009 Kimberley Process review mission and the Panel of Experts on Liberia (S/2009/640) continued to be slow. A meeting of the Presidential Task Force on Diamonds, which had not met for over 10 months, took place on 15 July and agreed to revitalize the work of the task force and hold more frequent meetings. With international support, the database system to record diamond statistics is now functional and regional diamond offices are being strengthened. A total of 18,046 carats of rough diamonds, valued at $9.9 million, were exported between January and June, with the Government collecting almost $300,000 in revenue. The Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy began conducting Kimberley Process compliance awareness activities in and around mining locations in Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount and Nimba Counties.

47. Government revenue from the commercial forestry sector was short of expectations, with operators paying only $2.1 million of the $13.5 million owed during fiscal year 2010-2011. A Government task force has been established to review the tax regime and assess whether easing some requirements might improve company compliance. The Forestry Development Authority has also issued procedures for community forestry development committees to access and manage funds on behalf of affected communities legally entitled to benefit-sharing. The establishment and operation of palm oil plantations on about 460,000 ha of land leased by concession companies in western and south-eastern counties commenced. However, the extension of operations is meeting resistance from communities, which request compensation and protest a lack of consultation on concession agreements.

H. Integration of the United Nations system

48. Further progress was made towards the "delivering as one" principle. In March, a monitoring and evaluation support unit was established to support "one programme" development. Also, in April, a road map was drafted outlining the programmatic and operational adjustments required to lead the United Nations in Liberia towards a "one programme" framework and harmonized services, and the United Nations Communications Group developed a new workplan based on "delivering as one" principles. The road map is being aligned with the Government's national visioning and growth and development processes.

IV. Cross-cutting issues

A. Public information

49. The United Nations worked closely with the Government and other partners on the refugee crisis, ensuring that host communities were given appropriate recognition for their generosity. UNMIL continued to work with the Liberia National Police and the Ministry of Justice to build capacity, including through on-the-job training for public information officers. The finalists of the joint Government/UNMIL annual talent competition "A Star Is Born" launched a musical compact disc with songs on the theme of children's rights.

B. Gender

50. To enhance gender mainstreaming, a participatory gender audit is being conducted of all United Nations agencies, including UNMIL. Continued support has been provided to mainstream a gender perspective into Government policies, including for the immigration and corrections services and for skills training for female police officers. An assessment of gender training programmes for security sector institutions was also conducted, with immediate follow-up action undertaken for the army, corrections and immigration services.

C. HIV/AIDS

51. UNMIL conducted awareness and prevention training on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections for newly deployed peacekeepers and offered voluntary HIV testing and behaviour change communication services. To increase the pool of HIV/AIDS peer counsellors, 23 national staff were trained. All services have been extended to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes operating in Liberia.

D. Conduct and discipline

52. UNMIL continued its efforts to ensure compliance with the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse through the implementation of preventive measures, such as induction and refresher training, spot-checks of off-limits establishments and an ongoing awareness-raising campaign aimed at sensitizing local communities. During the reporting period, 2,689 people in all United Nations personnel categories received integrated conduct and discipline training, including on the zero-tolerance policy, stress management and HIV/AIDS awareness. UNMIL also provided sexual exploitation- and abuse-awareness training for 563 members of local communities.

53. During the reporting period, 26 allegations of serious misconduct were reported, including 16 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, reflecting an overall increase from the previous reporting period.

E. Security and safety of United Nations personnel

54. Crime continued to pose a major security threat to United Nations personnel and property, especially in Monrovia. Five incidents of armed robbery targeting United Nations personnel were reported during the period in addition to 56 non-weapon-related crimes, including burglary, theft and assault. Three national staff members, three military personnel and one police officer died as a result of shooting, illness or accident.

V. Mission deployment

A. Military component

55. As indicated in my previous reports, the pre-drawdown adjustments to UNMIL in 2006, together with the three stages of the Mission's formal drawdown, which was completed in May 2010, and the withdrawal of the military guard force from the Special Court in Sierra Leone in March 2011, reduced the Mission's troop strength from 15,250 to its current authorized military strength of 7,952 personnel.

56. The UNMIL force headquarters is located in Monrovia, with operating forces deployed in two sectors, each comprising three infantry battalions. The Quick Reaction Force is based in Monrovia, with two forward operating bases near routes to the borders of Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. A total of 43 troop-contributing countries are represented among 7,703 troops, 79 staff officers and 130 military observers, including 209 women.

57. During the reporting period, UNMIL continued to support UNOCI through inter-mission cooperation arrangements pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions. Two military utility helicopters temporarily deployed to UNOCI returned to UNMIL on 28 June, while three armed helicopters remain deployed to UNOCI, providing critical support for joint border operations conducted by the two missions.

B. Police component

58. As at 1 August, the police strength of UNMIL stood at 1,330, out of an authorized ceiling of 1,375, including 456 police advisers, 843 officers in seven formed police units and 31 correction officers. There are 200 women in the police component. Three formed police units are deployed in Monrovia and one unit each in Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh and Lofa Counties. UNMIL also has 11 immigration advisers.

VI. Peacebuilding commission

59. The Liberia Peacebuilding Programme, based on the Peacebuilding Fund priority plan and estimated at $71 million, was approved on 5 May 2011. The three-year programme is focused on justice, security and national reconciliation. A core project is the establishment of five regional justice and security hubs to provide more effective justice and security services and presence throughout the country.

The Peacebuilding Fund has allotted an initial contribution of $20,154,000 for the implementation of the Programme, and the Peacebuilding Commission has initiated resource mobilization activities.

60. In June, the first official visit of a Peacebuilding Commission delegation, comprising Jordan, Liberia, Nigeria, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States, travelled to Liberia. The visit followed two earlier missions to Liberia by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission Liberia Configuration. The delegation met with national and international stakeholders, advocating legislative reform and the establishment of accountability and oversight mechanisms for the security and justice sectors. The Chair also received the President's endorsement of a proposal to develop a national reconciliation strategy, while the Government agreed to focus on certain key priorities for the first year, including the functioning of the Gbarnga Hub, the development of hubs two and three and support for the development of new corrections facilities and courts in some rural areas. With regard to reconciliation, it was agreed to prioritize initial support for land reform and youth empowerment.

VII. Transition planning

61. In its resolution 1938 (2010), the Security Council requested that UNMIL and the Government of Liberia continue to make progress in the transition planning process, especially towards conducting a comprehensive situational assessment and identifying critical gaps to be filled to facilitate a successful transition, and also requested that the United Nations and the Government draw up a joint transition plan on the transfer of responsibility for internal security from UNMIL to the appropriate national authorities. The Council also requested a revision of the Mission's benchmarks to include transition benchmarks, which would guide the handover of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities. These were set out in my previous report, dated 14 February 2011 (S/2011/72).

62. Following a transition workshop in June 2010, the Government and UNMIL initiated a joint transition planning process. Led by the National Security Council, the process has resulted in the establishment of a senior-level core group, a working group and four security task groups covering the areas of border security, law and order, security of assets and logistics. Joint situational assessment and transition worksheets have been developed outlining specific tasks to be handed over to national authorities. In April 2011, the four task groups began assessing the capacity of Liberian security agencies to assume responsibility in the four areas. However, progress has slowed, particularly for the Liberia National Police, which will absorb much of the burden for law and order and security of assets. The present focus on border security and security for the elections has overstretched the Government's planning capacity, and engagement on transition issues is likely to decrease during the electoral period.

63. With regard to the development of a joint security transition plan, a number of important tasks remain outstanding, including reaching agreement on the nature of the remaining gaps, identifying a strategy for filling critical gaps and devising a strategic approach that allows for testing the ability of national authorities to maintain security independently of UNMIL, which will be linked to Government security plans and the capacity to implement them. In my next report, I intend to

provide proposals for taking forward the preparation of a joint transition plan for the transfer of responsibility for internal security from UNMIL to the appropriate national authorities.

64. With regard to the transition strategy for handing over the Mission's civilian activities, in June a task force began mapping UNMIL civilian support activities to the Government and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, which will inform discussions on complementing ongoing security-transition planning and dovetailing with the "delivering as one" process.

VIII. Financial aspects

65. The General Assembly, in its resolution 65/301, appropriated the amount of $525.6 million, equivalent to some $43.8 million per month, inclusive of $513.4 million for the maintenance of UNMIL for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 and $12.2 million for electoral support to be provided by the Mission. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNMIL beyond 30 September 2011, the cost of maintaining the Mission until 30 June 2012 would be limited to the amounts approved by the General Assembly.

66. As at 15 July 2011, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNMIL amounted to $55.0 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as of that date amounted to $1,475.3 million.

67. As at 30 June 2011, amounts owed to troop and formed police contributors totalled some $29.8 million. Reimbursement of troop/formed police costs and contingent-owned equipment costs have been made for the period up to 31 May and 31 March 2011, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IX. Observations

68. Liberia is about to engage in its second round of democratic elections since the end of the conflict. The success of these elections, and the peaceful inauguration of a new administration, will be critical to the consolidation of the tremendous progress the country has made over the past eight years. With the successful completion of the voter registration exercise, Liberian authorities have shown increasing capacity to plan and execute the complex national event that the referendum and the elections represent, and it will be important to maintain this momentum throughout the process. The United Nations family in Liberia will continue to provide technical and logistical support, as required, to ensure the operational success of the exercise. However, the logistical challenges will be significant, as possibly all electoral events will be conducted during the country's rainy season and timelines will be extremely tight. I therefore urge all political actors and the population at large to make the utmost effort to ensure that the upcoming elections will be free, fair and without violence.

69. As the elections draw near and campaign activities intensify, I urge all political parties to use the democratic space to canvass support for their political positions while refraining from inflammatory remarks and provocative actions. It is important to adhere to the electoral timeline. I encourage the prompt resolution of the remaining differences between political parties and the National Elections

Commission concerning their understanding of certain aspects of the legal framework, and parties and citizens are encouraged to use legal channels and dispute mechanisms to resolve disputes that may arise regarding the electoral process. In this regard, I welcome the reactivation of the International Contact Group on Liberia, and am encouraged by increased dialogue within the Inter-Party Consultative Committee. The United Nations will continue to support the electoral process, including through the good offices of my Special Representative.

70. The work of the Government/UNMIL joint transition working group has highlighted a considerable number of national security gaps that will need to be addressed to enable a smooth handover of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national institutions. The situation along the border between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire presented opportunities for security institutions to demonstrate their operational capacity but revealed persistent challenges, especially in relation to logistics and equipment. It is therefore urgent that the Government's international partners increase support for the development of the security sector to ensure that UNMIL operations can be progressively scaled down as it hands over security responsibilities to national authorities. In this regard, I welcome the Peacebuilding Commission's focus on the five regional justice and security hubs, as they will increase access to justice and security throughout the country. I urge bilateral partners to support the hubs, the UNDP Justice and Security Trust Fund and the Liberia Peacebuilding Programme to promote increased effectiveness and accountability of the country's security and rule of law sectors, with a focus on institutional oversight and management, as well as critical logistical support and equipment, in particular to ensure that the Liberia National Police are adequately equipped before the elections.

71. I am concerned by the slow implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations, especially given the critical role reconciliation will play towards sustainable peace. I encourage the Independent National Commission on Human Rights to overcome its internal problems. The Commission must perform its critical mandate to serve as the country's premier independent human rights institution, as well as take on its central role in mapping the steps towards implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.

72. The refugee situation and security-related issues emanating from the post-election crisis in Côte d'Ivoire present significant challenges for Liberia. It is critical that financial support be provided to the revised Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan to cover humanitarian needs to the end of 2011, especially given that the influx of refugees continues. I am encouraged by the Government's proactive approach to addressing the issue of fighters from Côte d'Ivoire and welcome the establishment of a special internment facility for suspected Ivorian combatants. I also welcome the increased cooperation between the Governments of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire and the intensified inter-mission cooperation between UNMIL and UNOCI to address cross-border security challenges. I urge all stakeholders to prevent the movement of weapons, to separate refugees from former combatants and to ensure that suspected former combatants are treated in accordance with the law.

73. In its resolution 1938 (2010), the Security Council renewed the mandate of UNMIL until 30 September 2011, with an authorized strength of 7,952 military and 1,375 police personnel. Given the still limited capacity of national security institutions and the critical need to support electoral, border and other security

operations, the recommendations contained in my special report of 10 June 2009 (see S/2009/299) to maintain the Mission's military and police components at that authorized strength until after the 2011 elections remain valid. A comprehensive technical assessment mission, led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, will be deployed to Liberia after the inauguration of the next Government in order to develop detailed proposals for the next stages of the Mission's drawdown, including further reductions of the military component. That assessment will include a thorough review of the progress made towards the benchmarks developed for the security transition and will be conducted in close consultation with the Government of Liberia and all relevant stakeholders. I will provide the Security Council with my proposals for the next stages of the Mission's drawdown and the security transition in early 2012 in a special report containing the findings and recommendations of the assessment mission. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the Mission's mandate for a period of one year, until 30 September 2012, and conduct a review of its authorized military and police strength by 30 May 2012, based on the findings of the technical assessment mission mentioned above.

74. In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Special Representative for Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Løj, and UNMIL civilian and uniformed personnel for their contribution towards peace consolidation in Liberia. I would also like to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries; ECOWAS; the African Union; the International Contact Group on Liberia; United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; multilateral and bilateral donors; and international and local non-governmental organizations for their commitment and contributions to sustain peace and support development in Liberia.

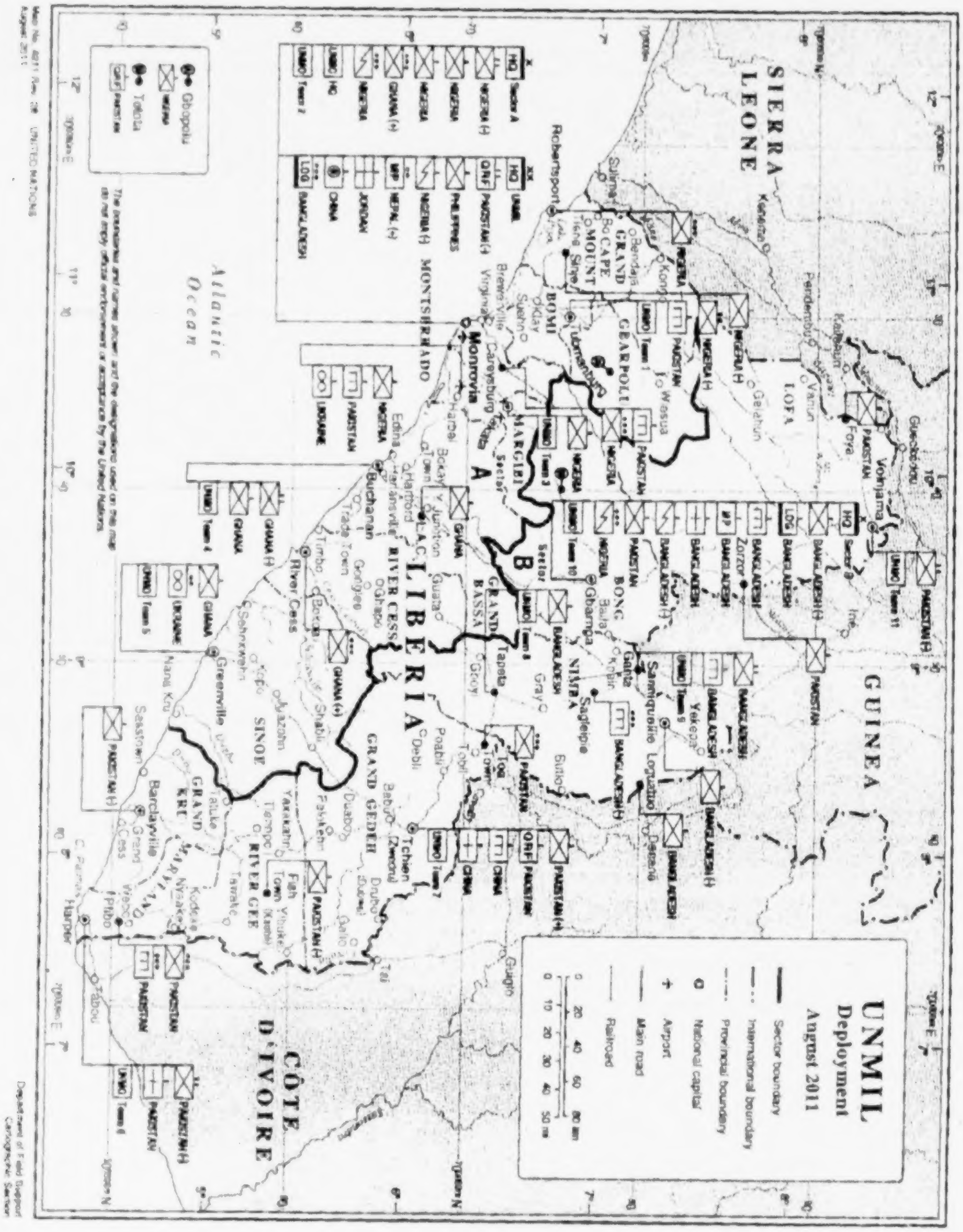
Annex

United Nations Mission in Liberia: military and police strength

(As at 1 August 2011)

	Military component					
Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Formed police units*	*Civilian police*
Argentina	0	0	0	0		13
Bangladesh	14	7	1 433	1 454		16
Benin	2	1	0	3		0
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2	1	0	3		0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0		12
Brazil	0	2	0	2		0
Bulgaria	2	0	0	2		0
China	2	6	558	566		17
Croatia	0	2	0	2		0
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0		4
Denmark	3	2	0	5		0
Ecuador	2	1	0	3		0
Egypt	5	0	0	5		4
El Salvador	2	0	0	2		1
Ethiopia	8	4	0	12		0
Fiji	0	0	0	0		28
Finland	0	2	0	2		0
France	0	1	0	1		0
Gambia	1	0	0	1		18
Germany	0	0	0	0		5
Ghana	9	7	700	716		20
India	0	0	0	0	243	3
Indonesia	1	0	0	1		0
Jamaica						1
Jordan	4	5	114	123	240	13
Kenya	0	0	0	0		18
Kyrgyzstan	3	0	0	3		2
Malaysia	6	0	0	6		0
Mali	1	0	0	1		0
Mongolia	0	2	148	150		0
Montenegro	2	0	0	2		0
Namibia	1	3	0	4		4
Nepal	2	3	15	20	240	14
Niger	2	0	0	2		0

Country	Military component				Formed police units	Civilian police
	Military observers	Staff officers	Troops	Total		
Nigeria	12	9	1 553	1 574	120	19
Norway	0	0	0	0		9
Pakistan	7	10	2 942	2 959		24
Paraguay	2	1	0	3		0
Peru	2	2	0	4		0
Philippines	2	1	115	118		30
Poland	2	0	0	2		3
Republic of Korea	1	1	0	2		0
Republic of Moldova	2	0	0	2		0
Romania	2	0	0	2		0
Russian Federation	4	0	0	4		11
Rwanda	0	0	0	0		3
Samoa	0	0	0	0		0
Senegal	1	1	0	2		0
Serbia	4	0	0	4		6
Sri Lanka	0	0	0	0		13
Sweden	0	0	0	0		13
Switzerland						3
Togo	2	1	0	3		0
Turkey	0	0	0	0		26
Uganda	0	0	0	0		6
Ukraine	2	2	275	279		18
United States of America	4	5	0	9		11
Uruguay	0	0	0	0		0
Yemen	0	1	0	1		6
Zambia	3	0	0	3		25
Zimbabwe	2	0	0	2		37
Total	**128**	**83**	**7 853**	**8 064**	**843**	**456**


UNMIL
Deployment
August 2011
Sector boundary
International boundary
Provincial boundary
National capital
Airport
Main road
Railroad
0 20 40 60 80 km
0 10 20 30 40 50 mi
SIERRA LEONE
GUINEA
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
LIBERIA
Atlantic Ocean
LOFA
BONG
NIMBA
GRAND CAPE MOUNT
GBARPOLU
BOMI
MONTSERRADO
MARGIBI
GRAND BASSA
RIVER CESS
SINOE
GRAND GEDEH
RIVER GEE
GRAND KRU
MARYLAND
Sector A
Sector B
Monrovia
Robertsport
Tubmanburg
Bopolu
Voinjama
Zorzor
Gbarnga
Sanniquellie
Buchanan
Kakata
Greenville
Zwedru
Fish Town
Barclayville
Harper
Tabou
Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section